

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 13, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Family Centers, 60 Palmer's Hill Road, Stamford

Council Members Present:

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| Behm, Tricia | Stamford Public Schools |
| Brennan, Karen | Stamford Discovery, United Way of Western CT |
| Burke, Jennienne Peoples | Care to Care (Family Centers) |
| Cook, Lucia | Literacy Volunteers of Stamford/Greenwich |
| D'Luc, Imelda | Stamford Head Start |
| Fico, Karen | Stamford Public Schools |
| Fox, Bridget | Chair, Stamford School Readiness Council |
| Hallsiey, Jennifer | United Way of Western CT |
| Lapine, Jennifer | CLC Leadership Council |
| List, Deborah | Co-Chair, Parent Outreach Committee |
| Malloy, Pat | Stamford Public Schools |
| Morrow, Polly | Pitney Bowes/Parent Representative |
| Mullett, Alisha | SoundWaters |
| Rauh, Polly | Stamford Board of Education |
| Reardon, Ellen | Stamford Museum and Nature Center |
| Rigano, Sue | Stamford Public Education Foundation |
| Sabia, Michele | Stamford Public Schools |
| Sandahl, Margo | Stamford Public Schools (Instructional Coordinator) |
| Short, Bob | Family Centers |
| Walker, Dori | Stamford Public Schools |
| Ward, Caroline | Ferguson Library |
| Wenz, Karen | First Presbyterian Nursery School |

Advisors:

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| Garvin-Kester, Barbara | Childcare Learning Centers |
| Sargent, Carol | Childcare Learning Centers |
| Tarantino, Sherry | Sacred Heart School |

Guests:

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| Ahuja, Sonja | Liaison, Graustein Memorial Fund |
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I. Welcome and Introductions

Bob Short kicked off the meeting by thanking Bridget Fox for her passion and devotion to the Stamford School Readiness Council and presenting her with a farewell breakfast cake.

Bridget shared her heartfelt thanks with the Council and expressed her intent to keep in touch in her new role as Executive Director of the Volunteer Center. She will be following up via e-mail with next steps for the Council. We will continue to meet regularly with an interim chair.

II. Announcements

- Bridget shared with the Council the mockups for Kindergarten Registration lawn signs that will be created and placed in targeted areas throughout Stamford. The idea came from Norwalk and was well received by the Stamford Public Schools. The signs will be reusable from year to year, created with one side in English and one in Spanish, and paid for by the Stamford Discovery/United Way of Western CT State Department of Education grant.
- The School Readiness Foundation met in early December and approved 8-9 scholarships for Stamford families.
- On Thursday, December 8, 1000 of our preschool children from CLC and Sacred Heart attended the *Goodnight Moon and Runaway Bunny* at the Palace Theater. Thanks to Steve Schneider and the First Student bus company staff, the transportation for the day was perfect. An additional 45 safety harnesses were purchased and all 110 were installed two days prior to the trip. Double bus runs were set up and as a result, all of our children were able to attend this year.
- Eva Weller shared that new parenting classes and PTLI classes will be starting in January. Anyone interested can contact Josephine Anderson at 203-977-5829 for more information.
- Sue Rigano gave an update on the Superintendent search process:
 - 200 people participated in 28 focus groups and another 380 completed an online or paper survey for the Superintendent Leadership Profile.
 - Between November 10 and December 1 CAGE Search Services gathered input from Board of Education members, faculty, administrators, school support staff, parents, students, elected officials, leaders of community based organizations, leaders of the faith community, senior citizens, and business leaders. The feedback that was provided will assist the Board of Education in the next phase of the search.
 - The final report is now posted at [www.stamfordpublicschools.org](http://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/filestorage/68/107/6698/Stamford_Superintendent_Leadership_Profile_12.11.pdf). The direct link is below: http://stamfordpublicschools.org/filestorage/68/107/6698/Stamford_Superintendent_Leadership_Profile_12.11.pdf.
 - A Spanish version of the report is being translated and will be posted on the SPS website next week.

III. Regular Reports

- Reports from Sacred Heart and CLC were sent to the Council in advance of the meeting and are included as Addendums to this report.
- Postscript to the meeting: Bridget shared the good news via e-mail that Sacred Heart School received notification from NAEYC that their program has been accredited! It is a wonderful testament to the hard work and organization of Sherry Tarantino and her staff.
- The Health & Wellness Committee, Education Committee, and Parent Outreach Committee will give reports next month.

IV. Old Business

There was no old business discussed.

V. New Business

A lengthy discussion was had by the Council around how to accurately account for the children who are not going to preschool. Many ideas were shared around how to gather data: the Office of Family Engagement will be doing a door to door campaign; Pitney Bowes could do a database check of outdated postal addresses; we could contact the Real Estate Council, pediatrician's offices, Literacy Volunteers, and others who regularly liaise with our constituency. It was suggested that we contact Anne Foundation and Kerri Hagan from the Health Department regarding their Community Assessment work, as there may be a way to learn more from them. Jennienne Burke volunteered to contact them.

Sonja Ahuja from the Graustein Memorial Fund gave a brief presentation on the Right from the Start initiative.

Right from the Start is a Connecticut-based initiative that evolved from the outcry of parents, early care providers, and a range of community stakeholders for a coordinated comprehensive early care and education delivery system. The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund convened teams of individuals and organizations committed to informing the process and the design of that system.

The Right from the Start team operates on the premise that an early education and child development system must include local decision-making structures, parent engagement, results-based community plans, integration of state and local efforts and a thorough evaluation of progress.

The underlying principals are:

- This effort is about **honoring and including the voice and successes of communities and families** in any system building effort, including the Governor's plan to create a coordinated system of early care, education, and child development at the state agency level.
- Right from the Start is **focused on whole child development**, and therefore strives to bring together stakeholders from both the education and health arenas, who are often not at the same table.
- The initiative emphasizes the need to better serve all of Connecticut's families, and therefore **lifts up for deeper analysis the racialized disparities** in outcomes for children in the state.

Sonja promised to follow up with the Council by sending more detailed information on the Right from the Start initiative and invited this group to think about the question: If you were to project forward 10 years, where will early education be?

VI. Close

The meeting was closed by the Council offering a "toast" to Bridget, thanking her for her energy, passion, and commitment, and presenting her with thank you gifts. She will be missed!

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 11
at the Literacy Volunteers of Stamford/Greenwich.**

Addendum A: Sacred Heart Report, December 2011

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 49 Students
- Pre – K 3 Class – 18
- Pre – K 4 Class #1-15
- Pre – K 4 Class #2-16
- All 20 School Readiness slots are full.

Program Attendance:

- Children – 95% Colds, fevers, stomach
- Staff – 90% (Colds, personal emergencies)

Staffing:

- No changes as of August 2011

Activities & Events:

- We had our NAEYC Accreditation visit on 11/9/11. The day went smoothly. We are currently waiting the result which should come on or before January 11th, 2012.
- On Nov. 8th, SHS staff attended a professional development at All Saint's School in Norwalk. All preschool teachers attended their own PD. Topics covered were the CT Preschool Assessment Framework, Creative Curriculum, Classroom Environment and the importance of Centers, Intentional Teaching and Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Preschool teachers throughout the diocese attended. Sherry Tarantino was the preschool PD presenter for the day.
- SHS held Parent/Teacher Conferences on 11/15 & 16. Approximately 75% of the parents were able to attend during that time. Teachers are currently still scheduling conferences to accommodate those parents that were unable to attend. Parent feedback has been positive.
- Two head teachers, Rebecca Hromjak and Luci Santora were granted State of CT Head Teacher status with CT Charts A Course.
- SHS held a dessert fundraiser with "Jeannine Fund Raisers, Inc", that was very successful. Parents would like to see the fundraiser just before Thanksgiving for next year.
- SHS held a VIRTUS Training Class (Sexual Abuse Awareness) on 11/2/11. SHS hosted approximately 22 adults from the Stamford area for this class. VIRTUS Training is open to the public.
- Two staff members were re-certified in Pediatric First Aid.
- Together staff and parents provided a special children's feast on 11/22.
- SHS participated in the USB annual Thanksgiving Parade!! Beautiful day and great weather!! A teacher and former parent held our school banner!!
- SHS had a fire water pipe break on Thanksgiving weekend. The water created quite a mess flowing for hours before the water was turned off by Aquarion Water Co. Assorted companies were called in to clean up the mess, inside and out. Two classrooms had approx. 2-3" of water. Very little damage or loss. All area carpets were brought out for drying and cleaning. The outside pipe is currently still being worked on. SHS was closed on Monday, 11/28 and delayed opening on 11/29. Parents and children were thrilled when our doors reopened again on 11/30!!

Addendum B: Childcare Learning Centers Report, December 2011

- Program Utilization
 - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
 - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 202; 4 year olds – 342; 5 year olds - 0
 - c. Children with disabilities = 18 with IEP
3 without IEP
 - d. Notes and Trends: N/A
- Program Attendance:
 - a. 99% Attendance. 5 children withdrew 2 had no attendance.
 - b. Notes and trends: - none
- Staffing
 - a. Open Positions – 1 Head Teacher in Cluster C
 - b. Recruitment – ad on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC
 - c. Training:
 - Bi-weekly meetings occurring on NAEYC Standards
 - Instructional Coordinators meet weekly with each classroom to review Learning Experience Plans
- Special Events/Activities
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - Parent Advisory Committee meeting occurred on November 15th and November 18th.
 - Behavioral Health team is meeting bi-weekly to discuss any children with challenging behaviors
 - Lunch and Learn with Liz Anavy discussing “Keeping Healthy in the Winter Months” occurred on November 10th.
 - Field trips to Bruce Museum and Stamford Museum and Nature Center for all classrooms.
 - Cluster B – field trip to Stamford High Preschool Lab- November 4th and 18th.
 - Julie Coakley is continuing the monitoring process and giving immediate feedback to the staff.
 - Notes and trends- N/A